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DAKAR PLS PASS DAO,ODC, AND RAO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/22/2017  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [PREF](#) [SG](#) [GA](#)  
SUBJECT: THE GAMBIA: CASAMANCE VIOLENCE, SENEGALESE  
ECONOMIC PRESSURE

REF: BANJUL 283 ET AL

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOSEPH STAFFORD, REASON 1.4 (B AND D)

CONCERN OVER CASAMANCE VIOLENCE  
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¶1. (C) On June 22, the Inspector General of Police (IGP), claimed to RSO that on June 18 a "major battle" had erupted between Senegalese military forces and Casamance rebels near the Gambian border town of Sibanor. He said that the fighting had resulted in "substantial losses" to the Senegalese military and that the latter would respond by mounting a "major offensive" against the rebels in "the next few days." The IGP said that the latest violence had not/not spilled over into Gambian territory. He stated that, when the expected Senegalese military offensive occurs, Gambian authorities would close at least portions of the border with the Casamance, but would not/not prevent refugees from crossing over into The Gambia.

GOS TO RESTRICT TRADE WITH THE GAMBIA  
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¶2. (C) A well-informed journalistic source, citing GOS sources, told us that the GOS had decided to register its displeasure over the GOTG's provocations of late (e.g., meddling in the Casamance) by instituting measures, effective June 26, to restrict trade with The Gambia. According to our source, the GOS, in a move against the Gambian re-export trade, planned to restrict imports from The Gambia through such means as hiking customs duty on some products and imposing on Gambian exporters additional documentary requirements for their shipments. At the same time, he continued, the GOS planned to have Senegalese exporters reduce shipments to The Gambia of such key commodities as cement and cooking gas. The source said that the GOS had decided against actual closure of the border with The Gambia, at least for the time being.

COMMENT  
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¶3. (C) In recent days, local business contacts have complained of growing difficulty in obtaining such vital imports from Senegal as cement and cooking gas. The GOS may have already embarked on its reported moves to apply economic pressure against The Gambia. END COMMENT.  
STAFFORD